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THE GAME

Zub, Private Third Class in the second glorious army of ZUBI, was not the happiest being in the ZUB system. In fact, he was terrified. He sat alone outside the office of his commanding officer, Sergeant ZUB. His knees began to shake, a single involuntary tear dipped from his left eye-stalk. If he had had a brow it would doubtless have been turrowed, but he hadn't so it wasn't.

Many thoughts awam around his tiny confused brain. "What have I done?" "Why was I sent for?" "Will I be sent into action?" "Why has he kept me waiting so long?" At this point he gave up, his brain wasn't really designed for thinking. ZUB was a precision-built, genetically-engineered fighting machine, his sole purpose in life was combat. He was also frightened of dying and had spent the last 478 years avoiding active service. ZUB was a coward, the had a feeling that this period of his life was coming to an end. He was right.

He had a feeling that this period of his life was coming to an end. He was right The office door opened silently. "Right, Sergeant ZUB, I'll see you now!" ZUB staggered to his feet, still shaking and entered the office.

"Actually, it's Private Zub, Sir" ZUB stammered, "Private Third Class 8AB

"Ah yes ...we'll see about that. I suppose you're wondering why I sent

for you?"

"Er..."
"This morning" the Sergeant interrupted, "an envelope was handed to me by General ZUB, this very envelope in fact!" The Sergeant waved a large golden envelope under where ZUB's nose would have been if he'd had one. "It doesn't come from the General", the Sergeant continued. "Oh, no. It."

"It doesn't come from the General", the Sergeant continued. "Oh, no. It comes from the top, from our beloved leader, King ZUB Inimselft" ZUB shook his eye stalks and groaned to himself. "Would you like me to read it to you?" the Sergeant asked as though he wasn't going to read it anyway. "Well ..."

The Sergeant opened the envelope and removed a single sheet of golden paper.

"It's addressed to the War Office and it's written in the King's own handwriting, it says ...

Flight you lot, stop playing games and cop this. I've got a real job for you, Someone's nicked one of my crown jewsis, the green eyeball of ZUB, and I want it back! Prime Minister ZUB tells me it's been traced to the planet ZUB. Ten. Apparently my borther who's the king of the outift wanted to add it to his little collection. He sent one agent, a junior officer in his second army, to steal it. I want you to send a similar ranking officer from our second glorious army to get it back. If he falls, believe me, you'll be sorry.

Yours, The King

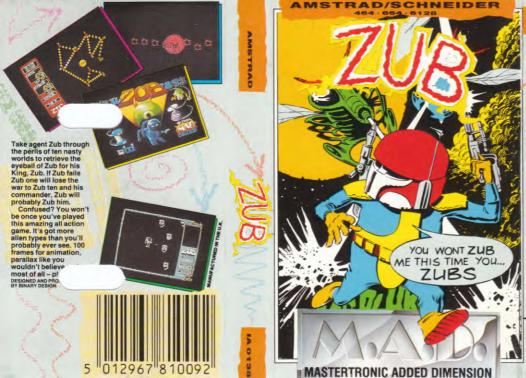
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